1989

Theories of Adult Psychosocial Development: A Review of the Trends in Research from 1983-1989

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THEORIES OF ADULT PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: A REVIEW OF THE TRENDS IN RESEARCH FROM 1983-1989

by

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A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School

of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

July

1989

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to thank Manuel Silverman, Ph.D, my second reader, for his encouragement and assistance throughout my master's program.

Additionally, I am grateful to the Wisconsin Province of the Society of Jesus and the Lewis Bremner Jesuit Community of Loyola University of Chicago, for their financial support and personal encouragement throughout this process.

Finally, I thank: Jim Diss, John Gibson, Tim Lannon, S.J, Doug Leonhardt, S.J, Rev. Tom Nestor, Sharon Nisius, Mitch Pacwa, S.J, Dean Roder, Joe Rosenfeld, and John Williams, who in their various capacities supported and encouraged me throughout this process to allow my heart to become more intelligent as my mind grew in kindness.

VITA

The author, Dennis Patrick McNeilly, S.J. is the son of Robert Thomas and Mary Eleanor (Lochray) McNeilly. He was born May 28, 1954, in Fort Dodge, Iowa.

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Chapter I: Introduction to the Major Theories of Adult Psychosocial Development

Several early theorists of psychosocial adult development believed human development was structured according to predictable patterns of sequential, age-graded phases and tasks which continued throughout the life-span. These theorists laid the foundation upon which our understanding of adult psychosocial development has been based. In their attempts to expand this base, recent descriptive studies have examined the influences of culture, social roles, occupations, and socioeconomic and family groups on these patterns, phases and tasks. Before examining such influences, the foundational theories of adult psychosocial development are summarized in this chapter.

Erik Erikson

Foremost important to adult psychosocial developmental theory has been the life-span theory of Erik Erikson (1950, 1968). Erikson believed human development unfolded over the life-span at assigned times in a series of eight life stages: basic trust versus mistrust, autonomy versus shame and doubt, initiative versus guilt, industry versus inferiority, identity versus role confusion, intimacy versus isolation, generativity versus stagnation, and integrity versus despair. As such, Erikson looked upon human development as normative, age-graded, organismic and internal (Rodgers, 1984).

Each developmental stage was associated with a developmental task and

crisis that allowed the individual the possibility for adequate or inadequate resolution. When the task was adequately resolved, the individual internalized a favorable outcome of the particular stage. Whereas an inadequate resolution reduced the individual's possibility for a move toward the next stage and reduced the individual's cumulative development.

Adult development within Erikson's theory begins during adolescence with Identity versus Role Confusion at 14 to 20 years. During this stage, the task of the individual is to resolve the questions of: Who am I? What am I to be? and What am I to believe that is really mine? When the individual adequately resolves this stage, the early adulthood tasks of the next stage of Intimacy versus Isolation: Who am I to love? What does love mean? are undertaken. Around age 40, Erikson believed middle adulthood involved the task of Generativity versus Stagnation when the individual learns to give beyond one's own family to be a contributor to society. Erikson's final stage of late adulthood involves the crisis of Integrity versus Despair from the age of 65 onward. During this time, the individual can reflect back on his life and find meaning and integrity in order to adequately resolve his life or into despair for a life that has passed by the individual.

Erikson based his theory on his own internal, biological, psychological and environmental experiences with life and those he knew in his clinical practice. Since most of his clients tended to belong to the upper-class society and social cohort, his investigations have been considered to be individualistic,

unsystematic, difficult to reproduce, and possibly reflecting a male bias (Rodgers, 1984). Despite these limitations, Erikson's developmental theory has continued to be the source of inspiration for many of the descriptive studies included in this review.

Daniel Levinson

In an effort to determine the phases of his own life development and whether an underlying structure exists to adult development, Daniel Levinson (1978) focused on male development. With research begun in 1968, Levinson followed the lives of 140 men for two years by examining biographical interviews and autobiographical statements inclusive of the life-span from childhood to the subject's present age. The men Levinson chose for his sample were from the geographical region between Boston and New York, and included diverse socioeconomic classes, racial, ethnic, and religious backgrounds, education levels, and marital statuses.

From his study, Levinson began to describe the successive, flexibly defined, age-graded stages and developmental tasks that every man encounters in life. He also began to posit the responses a man may be expected to make under different conditions within these stages. Levinson found five different central theoretical concepts emerged which provided a framework for his theory: life structure, transition stage, stable stage, dream, and mentor. Within this framework, Levinson held that a man's life structure evolves through an alternating sequence of transitional and stable stages throughout his life. These

stages serve as opportunities for the man to assess and reassess an existing life structure. Among the men of Levinson's sample, Levinson found three reassessment outcomes: 1) a new life structure was created, 2) the basic ingredients of an old life structure with some minor modifications were made, and 3) the individual failed to form a new life structure or reconfirmed a slightly modified older structure. As a result, Levinson believed that reassessment and changes in a man's life structure functioned to resolve the incongruence between a man's perceived sense of self in a life structure, and other aspects of self that were not emphasized in that structure.

A dream in Levinson's theoretical framework provides a man with a vision of himself, which is formulated, reformulated and modified throughout the life structure and the different stages of adult life. Similarly, Levinson believes that men form mentoring relationships in order to become autonomous with their mentors. Gradually, throughout the life structure, men learn to be mentors themselves, which Levinson believes, usually centers around their career.

Although Levinson's small sample was diversified on several dimensions, other dimensions, such as selection biases of geographical region and occupational diversity were underrepresented for the general population. As a result, it is difficult to consider Levinson's (1968) sample as an adequate basis for a general theory of adult development (Rodgers, 1984). An additional difficulty with Levinson's study involves the changes reported in men within

the two year period from 1968 to 1970. Such changes in development may have been reflective of age-graded changes, rather than actual developmental change in the men. They might also have reflected the impact of social and political events occurring during a historical period of social upheaval (Rodgers, 1984).

George Vaillant

Vaillant's (1971, 1974, 1976, 1977) contribution to adult developmental theory began in 1938 in a complex longitudinal study of 268 male members of the Harvard University classes of 1939 through 1944. Vaillant directed teams of psychologists, psychiatrists, and anthropologists who gathered autobiographical interview, self-development, family circumstance, career, family history, physical examination, Rorschach, and verbal and nonverbal test data for the purpose of studying adaptive mechanisms.

Vaillant's research identified an age-graded cycle of stages for men between ages 17 and 50, which varied according to life-event experiences. From ages 21 to 27, Vaillant found men engaged with questions of intimacy as they sought friendships and initiated relationships with significant others. During this time period, Vaillant discovered that men changed their criteria for friendships and that failure at intimacy led to difficulties or postponement of the tasks of the next adult stage. For the period of age 27 to 35, Vaillant found men engaged in career consolidation, during which they worked hard, played by the rules, and sacrificed play in their lives in order to consolidate

their careers, and they devoted themselves to their families. During the ages of 35 to 45, Vaillant's subjects underwent a period of assessment and reordering in their lives. During this transition period, men became more aware of and reflective of the meaning of their mortality, which often reawakened sexual expression of intimacy. From age 45 to 55, Vaillant found men engaged in issues of "generativity", such that those who had resolved past tasks had been able to achieve generativity while those who had failed at past stages were unable to achieve generativity.

In as much as Vaillant was concerned with men's adaptive mechanisms, he was also interested in the way his subjects resolved their instinctual conflicts. He was interested in how they dealt with the demands of the outside world, the influence of important people in their lives, and their internal prohibitions from childhood. Vaillant discovered the men with the best outcomes had developed the use of mature and adaptive defense mechanisms, such as intellectualization, repression, displacement, altruism, humor, suppression, and sublimation. Whereas the men with arrested development tended to use less mature mechanisms, and did not shift to those defense mechanisms used by the more successful men.

Vaillant's focus on how his subjects resolved the internal and external conflicts of their lives provided a new means by which theorists looked at adequate and inadequate coping mechanisms across the life-span. His theory has also provided a flexibility in specifying the ages when stages are initiated.

However, like other theorists such as Levinson, the age-graded changes that Vaillant's subject reported may have been confounded by the historical impact of the Great Depression and of their growing up into adulthood during World War II. The influence of these historical events make it difficult to differentiate them from age-graded developmental influences of their lives (Rodgers, 1984). As a result, Vaillant's moderately sized study cannot be said to be representative of men in general, and therefore it is difficult to consider this a basis for a general theory of adult male development (Rodgers, 1984).

Bernice Neugarten

Believing the influences of common sociocultural expectations, as well as gender and social class can alter, retard or prohibit adult development, Neugarten (1976) has highlighted three time perspectives in which to distinguish adult development over the life-span. Those three are: historical or calendar time, social time and its socially defined expectations, and life or chronological time. Neugarten believes that the passing of historical time lead to changes in social expectations such that certain behaviors were considered more age appropriate. As a result, after internalizing such social expectations for age-appropriate life events, adults consider themselves either "on time" or "off time". As adults pass through their chronological time, they "make plans, set goals, and reassess those goals along a time line shaped by these expectations" (1976, p. 18).

Neugarten held that once an individual enters adulthood, the individual

becomes preoccupied with life-span expectations and develops the ability "to create for oneself a sense of the predictable life cycle, presumably different[iating] the healthy adult personality from the unhealthy" (p. 18). Therefore, Neugarten held that among healthy adults, the normal expected life events, new roles, changes in self-concept and identity are not usually experienced as crises or trauma, because they are anticipated by the individual.

Neugarten's (1964, 1966, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1976) cross-sectional studies have investigated ego transitions in personality during the adult years, and whether various personality dimensions exhibited age-related stability or change. Neugarten's findings have suggested that personality structure is stable across all age groups according to four different types: integrated, defended, passive-dependent, and independent. Similarly, adaptation strategies, such as coping styles or goal-directed behavior were not found to be age-related. The importance of stable coping behavior was found to provide continuity within the personality, despite changes in roles and social status (Neugarten, 1964).

Neugarten found several differences in personality among age groups. According to the degree of emphasis the individual placed on inner life versus external life, older adults were found to be more introspective, self-reflective, and responsive to inner stimuli than among younger adults (Neugarten, 1964). While after midlife, Neugarten found that women seemed to be more tolerant of, and willing to act on, their aggressive and self-interest tendencies, whereas men became more tolerant of, and acted on, their nurturant and collaborative

tendencies (Neugarten & Gutmann, 1958). Neugarten held that such a shift in male and female behavior occurred because older men and women have the decreased concerns for social norms, and thus are able to engage in fewer of the socially sanctioned behaviors associated with their sex roles. As a result, Neugarten has suggested that psychological well-being in old age is partially a function of maintaining established patterns of activity and involvement so that as some roles cease, others are added.

With these theorists of adult psychosocial development as a background for considering the literature from 1983 to 1989, attention is now turned to a summary of Rodger's review of this literature prior to 1983 and a review of recent descriptive studies. These studies are considered according to the influences of sex differences and life patterns, potential moderating variables, and new directions in the research on adult psychosocial development.

Chapter II: A Review of the research trends prior to 1983

Theories and research on the concept of adult development began to appear in the scholarly and popular literature in the early 1960's and 1970's. Since that time, numerous authors have written about adult development, stimulating the growth and understanding of adult development. Within that development, at least three kinds of adult developmental theory have emerged: (1) psychosocial theory, (2) cognitive-developmental theory, and (3) typological theories (Rodgers, 1984).

A recent review of psychosocial development found several emerging theories and related research on adult development (Rodgers, 1984). Borrowing from the life-span developmental orientation to the study of adult psychosocial development, Rodgers' (1984) review carefully sought to describe, compare, evaluate and integrate within-individual and between-individual changes in behavior from conception to death (Rodgers, 1984).

Since Rodgers' (1984) review, several new studies have emerged, existing theories have been advanced, and related research has raised new questions for this area. As a result, the purposes of this paper are threefold. First, to summarize Rodgers' (1984) review of the psychosocial theories and related research on adult development before 1984. Secondly, to update, synthesize, and integrate the emerging theories and related research on adult psychosocial

development since 1983. Finally, to speculate on and examine the implications of this body of research for new directions in theories of adult psychosocial development since 1983.

In his 1984 review, Rodgers (1984) found that the present state of adult psychosocial developmental theory continued to follow the foundational theories laid down by Jung (1954, 1961, 1969, 1971), Buhler (Buhler & Massarik, 1968), Erikson (1950), Havinghurst (1948) and Sanford (1966,1981). Stimulated by these foundational theories, descriptive studies by Levinson (1974, 1978), Gould (1972, 1975, 1978, 1981), Sheehy (1974, 1981), Vaillant (1971, 1974, 1976, 1977), Neugarten (1966, 1968, 1969, 1970), and Lowenthal, Thurnher and Chiriboga (1975) have subsequently assessed the applicability of predictable patterns of sequential, age-graded phases to broader populations.

Rodgers (1984) found considerable agreement and some disagreement in the various life-span patterns contained within these descriptive studies, which have led to general theories of adult development (Rodgers, 1984). Reviewing only those studies directly related to the foundational or recent theories of adult psychosocial development, Rodgers (1984) categorized them under three areas: sex differences, life patterns, and moderating variables (or barriers to adult development).

As a majority of the descriptive theories were initially developed with male samples, Rodgers' (1984) initial focus on sex differences sought recent studies that included women in their samples or studies that relied upon women

only samples. In this way Rodgers (1984) insured the consideration of the ways in which life-span developmental tasks differ between men and women.

Two such all-women or women-inclusive studies included in Rodgers' (1984) review (Gruen, 1964; Straub, 1982), were found to be further supportive of Erikson's theory. Specifically, these studies affirmed Erikson's contention that the kinds of resolution achieved in earlier stages of development influence the achievement of subsequent stages, except for sex differences on intimacy (Gruen, 1964). These two studies were also supportive of Erikson (1950, 1968) and Chickering's (1969) theories which believed identity and autonomy issues are prior to issues of intimacy in interpersonal relationships (Straub, 1982, Rodgers, 1984).

Specifically in these two all-women or women-inclusive sample studies, women had significantly higher ratings on intimacy than did men at all ages and across all classes. Especially in the 50-to-60 year age group (Gruen, 1964), these two studies found that women dealt with the tasks of intimacy before or concurrently with issues of autonomy (Straub, 1982).

A second focus of Rodgers' (1984) review was the relationship among roles, role changes and life patterns among men and women. Following Neugarten's (1976) suggestion that our society has definite norms for sex specific behaviors at various ages within different roles, Rodgers (1984) highlighted a study of the stress and costs of nonadherence to sex-role norms for women with careers in business (Hennig and Jardim, 1977).

In their comparison of men and women, Hennig and Jardim (1977) found

that women tended to make career decisions later than men. Thus, while men were found to be more conscious of career commitments, they made longer-range plans from their early twenties onward (Hennig and Jardim, 1977). Additionally among women, Hennig and Jardin (1977) found that female managers reported more passive and self-discounting behaviors than their male managers. These female managers felt that their jobs and careers just "happened to them". As a result, these female women managers tended to place greater emphasis on individual self-improvement as their motivation for seeking career advancement than did men in the study (Hennig and Jardim, 1977).

Rodgers' (1984) third and final focus within his review, considered five potential moderating variables or barriers to adult development. Rodgers' (1984) believed such moderative variables temper the generalizations of age-graded influences often found in descriptive studies of the general population or other cohorts.

Accordingly, the five moderative phenomena Rodgers (1984) highlighted are: (1) changes in culturally acceptable roles and expectations; (2) the number and kinds of roles in one's life, particularly among women (Baruck and Barnett, 1980); (3) one's life patterns; (4) the nature of one's field of endeavor, among teachers (Smith, 1972, Fuller and Brown, 1975, Burden, 1979, Newman, 1978, and Hange, 1982), among allied medical professions (Broski, Manuselis, & Noga, 1982; Joiner & Blayney, 1974; Love, 1977; Matteson, Ivancevick, & McMahon, 1977; Perry, 1969), student personnel workers, (Kuh and Thomas, 1983), and ministers

(Leavitt, 1982); and (5) one's socioeconomic status (Rodgers, 1984).

Throughout his review, Rodgers (1984) attempted to describe the kinds of psychosocial developmental changes experienced by adults. Additionally, Rogers (1984) sought to answer the question of whether these changes can be sequenced by age-graded stages or by life events (Rodgers, 1984). In order to answer these two questions, Rodgers' (1984) analysis divided theorists and researchers' views of developmental change into two developmental groups. The first of these two groups view developmental change through the external causal influences on adult development. The second of Rodgers (1984) two groups are those who view developmental change through the internal psychological and biological influences on adult development.

The first of these two groups, reflective of a behavioral orientation to development, emphasizes external causal life-event influences to human development. As a result, this group interprets life events and development in terms of social or history-graded influences. In this group, Rodgers (1984) includes such theorists and researchers as: Neugarten, Lowenthal, Baruck and Barnett, and Schlossberg.

The second of Rodgers' (1984) groups, reflect a more organismic or psychoanalytic orientation toward development. As such, this group emphasizes the internal psychological and biological influences on human development. Their concentration is on internal psychological meaning and biological aging. In this perspective, constructs such as developmental stages, tasks, and personality types

are used to describe the regularities in within-individual and between-individual behavior changes (Rodgers, 1984). Theorists Rodgers (1984) includes in this group, Rodgers (1984) are such theorists as Erikson, Buhler, Jung, Sanford, Levinson, Gould, Vaillant, Sheehy, Chickering, and Hennig and Jardim.

Meanwhile, in an effort to bring these two groups together, several other theorists have advocated the integration of these two group and their differing perspectives on adult development (Hultsch and Plemons, 1979; and Levinson, 1980; Farrell and Rosenberg, 1981; Alpert, 1981; and Wortley and Amatea, 1982). To such a suggestion however, Rodgers (1984) has warned that any integration of these two perspectives must first incorporate the fact that descriptive or correlational studies cannot determine causality.

Despite this warning, Rodgers' (1984) review has singled out two particular studies (Farrell and Rosenberg, 1981; and Aslanian and Brickell, 1980) which he believes begin to correct for the three methodological and generalizability difficulties found in most descriptive studies. Those three difficulties, as highlighted by Rodgers (1984) include: (1) the complex precipitating events or life experiences associated with initiating selected developmental periods (Farrell and Rosenberg, 1981); (2) the methodological problems in adult developmental research; and (3) the situational, dispositional and institutional barriers that may hinder adequate resolution of transitions and issues (Aslanian and Brickell, 1980; Rodgers, 1984).

Unfortunately, the two studies singled out in Rodgers' (1984) review only

begin to touch upon the sampling improvements that Rodgers (1984) had suggested. As a result, future research must look toward inclusion of sampling improvements which seek to achieve a more representative sample of women and men in various age groups of the general population (Rodgers, 1984). Rodgers (1984) believed such sampling procedures as sequential cross-sectional and longitudinal designs would improve research designs. Rodgers (1984) also believed such designs would also help to clarify the possible confounding of age and cohort variables so often found in the current general theories of adult development.

Rodgers' (1984) final suggestion of his review points to the need for the combination of selected constructs of adult theory with the paradigm of person-environment interaction models. Rodgers (1984) believed that such a framework would provide several possibilities for research. First, it would provide the number and kinds of transitions found in adult roles and in life structures. Next, it would help to determine whether men and women in different patterns face similar or different sets of tasks or challenges at similar or different times in their lives. Finally, such a combination of selected constructs and person-environment interaction models would allow for the relationships among patterns, socioeconomic classes, and the variety of outcomes for transitions found in adult development (Rodgers, 1984).

With Rodgers' observations, analysis, and suggestions as a guide and framework for considering the literature from 1983 to 1989, chapters three, four and five of this paper will update Rodgers' (1984) review. Consideration will be

given to a review of descriptive studies of sex differences and life patterns, potential moderating variables, and new directions in the research.

Chapter III: Sex Differences and Life Patterns

The majority of the foundational and descriptive theories of adult psychosocial development have been drawn from all male or predominately male sample populations. However, among a number of the more recent studies, women have been included in order to examine how life-span, age-graded developmental tasks differ between the sexes. In an effort to update, synthesize, and integrate the results of these recent studies, and to assess whether the patterns reported in these recent studies are also found in broader populations, Rodgers' (1984) has categorized them according to: sex differences and life patterns, potential moderating variables to development, and studies highlighting new directions in the recent research. Among the recent sex differences and life patterns studies, three further subdivisions of: male and female differences, female differences, and male differences can be made, and are summarized here.

Male and Female Differences

Recent literature has studied the life-span or age-graded developmental task differences in men and women along four different subject areas: 1) identity and intimacy, 2) early childhood effects, 3) stability and consistency of early adulthood across adulthood, and 4) the changing roles of adulthood.

In their longitudinal study of the relations between a measure of identity taken during early adulthood and measures of the achievement of intimate relationships collected eighteen years later, Kahn, Zimmerman, Csikszentmihalyi,

and Getzels (1985) found a relation between ego identity and the achievement of intimacy that differed between men and women. Drawing from sample of sixty-seven male and seventy-five female artists, they suggest that men who lack a well-developed sense of identity in young adulthood were likely to remain single into midlife. They found that women's decision to marry were independent of their achievement of identity, and without a well-developed sense of identity, women were also found to have problems maintaining stable, enduring marriages. Thus, Kahn, Zimmerman, Csikszentmihalyi, and Getzels' (1985) results suggest that for men, the attainment of intimacy relates to the decision whether or not to get married. Whereas women may be bound by the social prescription of marriage, in which case their identity achievement is unrelated to marriage decisions. The attainment of identity for these women seemed to relate not to the decision to marry , but to the stability of their relationships.

The discovery of these two differing patterns for men and women highlights the social and psychological factors that contribute to the formation of gender-related differences in such relational differences between identity and patterns of intimacy further supports earlier findings that have highlighted the existence of a distinct and unique developmental path for women, (Gilligan, 1982). However, because Kahn, Zimmerman, Csikszentmihalyi, and Getzels' (1985) findings rely upon a subsample of artists, the generalizability is questionable, and further studies in this area are necessary.

A second area of interest within the recent sex differences and age-graded

developmental literature has focused on the effects of early childhood influences upon adult development. The first of three recent studies in this area investigated the role of genetic influences on adult personality development across the life cycle. Through a longitudinal study of one hundred thirty-three college-age monozygotic and dizygotic twin pairs completing an abbreviated MMPI, Pogue-Geile and Rose (1985), suggest that changes of specific personality characteristics are not uniformly affected by general secular, age-specific, or environmental influences such as those suggested by Erikson (1968). Instead, idiosyncratic experiences are more important than common family enviornmental influences for development.

A second study on the effect of early childhood, considered the relationship of parent child-rearing variables and child behaviors to adult attainment of ego development. From a sample of 390 adults originally derived from a sample of the entire third-grade population of a semirural, middle-class county in New York State, Dubow, Huesmann, & Eron's (1987) longitudinal study confirmed their theoretically-based assumptions that social interaction factors present in the early home environment are related to adult ego development more strongly for females than males. Parent child-rearing practices characterized by the absence of rejection, a nonauthoritarian approach to punishment, and a high level of identification between the parent and child were associated with higher levels of adult ego development. Unfortunately, methodological difficulties with the study prohibit the generalizability of its conclusions.

A third study of this group investigated how early personality shapes the life course. Caspi's (1987) study focused on two broad forms of social maladjustment in late childhood (ages 8-10): explosive and undercontrolled behavior; and withdrawn, inhibited reaction patterns. Caspi's (1987) results found withdrawn males, unlike withdrawn females, more prone to difficulties in their transition to adult roles. As a result, males assumed marriage, parenting, and occupational careers at a significantly older age. Caspi's (1987) dissertaion abstract describes his results in terms of mechanisms that may provide continuity of behavioral styles across time and circumstance: interactional continuity and cumulative continuity. With regard to further age-graded studies of male and female differences, Caspi (1987) proposed a life course framework borrowed from personology and sociology, which includes the search for the "what", "where", and "how" of personality continuity.

Three recent studies have examined gender differences across the life-span. They have considered the stability and consistency of early adulthood throughout the adult personality. In the first of these studies, Stevens and Truss, (1985) investigated the stability and change of traits as measured by the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS). During a specific period of adulthood, from college age studies to over 40 years of age, Stevens and Truss (1985) found several traits on which the sexes changed, and yet found the sexes became more alike across the years. Males were found to decrease in needs for achievement and increase in needs for affiliation, abasement, and nurturance. Females were

found to decrease in needs for deference and order, and increase in needs for achievement, autonomy, heterosexuality, and aggression. Stevens and Truss' (1985) analysis suggests that adult personality does seem to change over time, but not in a total or overwhelming manner. Like most samples used in adult aging studies, Stevens and Truss (1985) however, recognize that their sample was not representative of the general population, because of serious bias from volunteer effects and subject attrition.

In keeping with the results with previous studies indicating substantial stability of adult personality, a recent study by Costa and McCrae (1988) found several lines of evidence to suggest personality stability of men and women across the adult age range. Employing a self-report measure consisting of the five domains of normal personality on the NEO Personality Inventory, Costa and McCrae (1988) found Neuroticism (N), Extraversion (E), Openness to Experience (O), Agreeableness (A), and Conscientiousness (C), all indicative of stability in adult personality. These results appears to indicate that aging itself has little effect on personality. This appears true despite the fact that the normal course of aging includes disease, bereavement, divorce, unemployment, and many other significant events for substantial portions of the population.

In another recent study, Conley (1984) considered the relation of scale scores on personality inventories to self-reported psychiatric symptoms. Drawing upon data of 300 men and 300 women between the ages of 26 to 45 years, from the Kelly Longitudinal Study, Conley (1984) confirmed the findings of studies

suggesting that neuroticism and social introversion-extraversion are longitudinally consistent traits. Thus, Conley (1984) concluded for men and women across time, neuroticism and social introversion-extraversion were found to be essentially independent and stable traits. However, Conley (1984) cautions against the generalizability of these results because of three major methodological limitations: restriction to self-reported characteristics, use of mailed questionnaires, and perhaps most problematic, the use of a single cohort. Conley's (1984) cautions underscore the lack of consensus in the current literature. Even when the research has been restricted to the same personality inventory, the degree and pattern of stability and change in adult personality is questioned.

A fourth and final focus within the recent gender difference literature has considered the transition of roles to adulthood. A recent study by Marini (1987) measured the process of male and female role change during the transition to adulthood. From longitundinal data of high school students in ten Illinois high schools in 1957-1958 and from a 15 year follow-up survey of the same individuals in 1973-74, Marini (1987) found gender differences in the timing and sequencing of role changes, and found interrelationships among role changes at the individual level. Among males, full-time education remained an important factor, such that they were more likely to remain in full-time education longer, and were more likely to return to it after an initial interruption and continue in school on a part-time basis. Females, on the other hand, tended to leave school earlier and enter adult roles earlier. Additionally, regarding marriage and parenthood, males were

found to be more likely to experience familiar role changes prior to leaving school because gender differences in adult family roles made marriage and parenthood more compatible with the continuation of education for males than for females.

In a similar study, Chiriboga (1984) analyzed the impact of three levels of social stressors. He examined micro stressors: ordinary day-to-day circumstances, meso stressors: the relatively infrequent stressors that impact directly on individual i.e., transitions etc., and macro stressors: which derive from a pervasive effect on society -- i.e., economic depression upon adaptation styles over long periods of time. Chiriboga (1984) found that regardless of actual incidence of events, older men and women tended to perceive more stressors in their lives and were more affected by social problems.

Through the use of data from a 1969 longitudinal study of normative transitions of four groups of adults, Chiriboga (1984) found the day-to-day, or micro stressors of life contributed to an explanation of the happiness and symptomatology of women, whereas the perception of social problems affected men's long-term symptom expression. Men also manifested greater continuity in exposure to positive life stressors, whereas women manifested greater continuity with negative life stress. These sex differences suggest that stress conditions play a greater role in the happiness and symptomatology of women than men. When these sex differences were considered according to stressors at various life stages, Chiriboga (1984) found that stress levels were similar for men and women, with

the later stages of life associated with a lower incidence of events and hassles, but a greater perception of stress and a greater weight of social problems affecting older men and women.

Finally, a recent study by Ochberg (1986), describes the relationship between private self-experience and the strategic use of selectively exaggerated social milieux. Unfortunately Ochberg (1986) does not make quantitative distinctions between gender differences and types of moratoria in predominately qualitative data from two interview studies of 30 Harvard undergraduates, and a second group of 13 undergraduate students.

Female Differences

Research interests in women's adult psychosocial life-span development have continued to take researchers into three directions of inquiry: those studies that seek to apply Levinsonian theory to women's adult development; those studies that consider the effects of the 'social clock' on women's development; and those studies that consider the stability and consistency of women's adult personality across various and changing roles.

In an attempt to apply Levisonian theory to women's development, Roberts and Newton (1987) reviewed the findings of four unpublished dissertations (inclusive of thirty-nine biographies) that used Levinson's theory to study women's adult development. Their results suggest an underlying pattern in women's adult development which appears to be a consequence of chronological age, and appears to occur at roughly the same ages in the lives of Levinson's male subjects,

particularly the transitional period at around age 30.

Thus, Roberts and Newton's (1987) findings appear to differ from Levinson's sequence of alternating stable and transitional periods, in that the absence of a specific occupational goal women's lives may be characterized as conflicted and unstable throughout much of early adulthood and into middle age. Overall, however, their findings were consistent with the previously held view that women strive for attachment and men strive for separation (Gilligan, 1982). Roberts and Newton (1987) recognize, however, the need for further biographical studies of women's lives in order to form hypotheses about life structure development after the Age Thirty Transition.

A second area of interest within the recent research has focused on the effects of the 'social clock'. Helson, Mitchell and Moane (1984) identified how the study of women's lives may be organized in terms of the concept of adherence and nonadherence to social clock patterns. Helson, Mitchell and Moane (1984) believe this concept provides several advantages to adult developmental research: 1) it requires attention to the life schedules of particular individuals, in particular societies and cohorts, thus providing a powerful way to show differences and compare lives in psychologically meaningful terms; 2) it organizes the study of lives in terms of patterned movement along, or away from, active social paths; 3) it promotes a "humanistic view", where individuals are conceived as meaningfully struggling with and engaged in projects that evolve over time, and 4) it is a particularly useful concept in studying early and middle

adulthood.

From a longitudinal study of the early and middle adulthood of 132 women who graduated from college in 1958 and 1960, Helson, Mitchell and Moane (1984) found early divorce, with all of its stresses, for some women to have been a consequence of the pressure to launch a social clock project before sufficient independence was achieved. Considerable stress was found among women on what the authors called the FSC or Feminine Social Clock. During this time, while women acquire and cultivate a new set of personality strengths and weave them into the existing personality, the critical achievement of the feminine social clock is to get married and start one's family in one's early or middle 20's. Thus, Helson, Mitchell & Moane's (1984) results seem to advance and more clearly define the work of Neugarten (1979), which suggested how our society has definite norms for behaviors that are expected for people of different sexes at various ages within different roles. As such, age norms or "social clocks" influence behavior in that life events occurring at their socially expected times are said to be less stressful than those occurring at nonnormative times because they are better integrated into the social system. Within such an outlook, men and women tend to compare themselves with their friends, siblings, work colleagues, or parents in deciding whether they have made good in terms a time line.

A third focus within recent studies of women's adult life-span age-graded development concerns the stability and consistency of adult personality across various and changing roles. With an emphasis on the adolescent period of

development, Johnson (1984) studied the life cycle development of women and found five themes within female adolescent development. Johnson's first theme, the period of adolescence, was neither age-specific nor did it consist of predictable, sequential, developmental tasks. As a result, Johnson (1984) concludes that age and stage developmental theories are inappropriate as heuristic models for adolescent women. Second, Johnson (1984) found that relationships clearly stood out as the central organizing element around which female adolescents develop, thus women's development cannot be adequately studied without the examination of relationships. Third, female adolescents plan their lives on two levels at once: one level in terms of motherhood and one in terms of career. Women were found to shift foci between these two levels as their relationships changed. Fourth, changes which occured during adolescence moved females from identification with the ideals of innocence, justice and love, to the incorporation of the realities of evil, death, and broken relationships. Finally, Johnson (1984) found that women in her study perceived menarche as a hygiene problem rather than as an important marker event in their development.

A few years later, in a similar study, Helson and Moane (1987) examined a single cohort of women born between 1936 and 1939, who were first studied when they were seniors at a private women's college in 1958 and again in 1969 (at the age of 21 years old), and who were then studied when they were 26-28 years old, and again studied in their early middle age (42-45) years; to see whether changes in personality are demonstrable across different life paths.

Their study also considered whether such changes across different life paths would support hypotheses derived from concepts of adult development.

Among women ages 21 to 43, Helson and Moane (1987) found increases in women's self-discipline and commitment to duties, in their independence and confidence, and in their coping skills and ego development. Among women between the ages of 21 and 27, Helson and Moane (1987) also found increases in measures of femininity, which decreased between ages 27 and 43, while dependence and confidence increased after age 27. Helson and Moane (1987) therefore argue that personality does change for women from youth to middle age in consistent and often predictable ways. Their research highlights two factors in normative personality change: the influence of sex role specialization in early adulthood and the consequences of its decline thereafter; and the degree of participation in the culture.

Helson & Moane's (1987) findings therefore indicate that normative personality change is not specific to particular social clock projects. However, it must also be kept in mind that women who undertook neither career nor family showed little normative change. This would indicate that the endeavors of young adulthood, with their demands for control of impulse, interpersonal skills, independence, perseverance, and goal orientation are developmental tasks that provide women a press for normative change (Helson and Moane, 1987).

Finally, in a description and comparison of the experience of a group of 35 gifted women at midlife, from UCLA's 1957 Gifted Student Program, (26 of

whom were retested, surveyed and interviewed in 1984) Schuster (1987) found gifted women at midlife higher in life satisfaction, more career-committed and successful, and more conventional than similar subjects of several previous studies. Unfortunately, Schuster's (1987) reliance upon a single cohort severly limits the generalizability of these findings.

Male Differences

For the most part, recent studies of male adult age-graded development have continued to focus on further application of foundational theories, such as Erikson's and Levinson's. Therefore this research can be categorized according to: further applications of Eriksonian theory; further applications to specific and special populations of Levinson's age-graded stages; criticisms of Levinson's age-graded stages; and the stability and consistency of the adult male personality.

In their attempt to apply Erikson's theory in a longitudinal study of men, Snarey, Son, Kuehne, Hauser & Vaillant (1987) found men's parenting resolutions, marital outcomes, and midlife achievement of psychosocial generativity were predictable on the basis of knowledge of prior infertility coping strategies and parenting outcomes. Infertile men who became fathers, either by adoption or by birth were more likely to be generative in middle adulthood than were childless men. Overall, this rate of generativity was highest among infertile adoptive fathers, followed by infertile birth fathers, the fertile subjects, and finally by the infertile subjects who remained childless. Thus, from their sample of 343 married men prospectively studied for four decades, Snarey, Son, Kuehne, Hauser &

Vaillant's (1987) findings lend support to the Eriksonian idea that parenting during early adulthood is a crucial, but not sufficient prior condition for the midlife achievement of psychosocial generativity.

So as to avoid misinterpretations of these findings, Snarey, Son, Kuehne, Hauser, & Vaillant (1987) stress four areas of caution concerning the sample of this study. First, their sample was not fully representative of men in the United States, in that there were no Blacks, none of the men were born into the middle class, and all of the men grew up in urban communities. Second, several historical factors placed limitations upon the generalizability of Snarey, Son, Kuehne, Hauser, & Vaillant's (1987) findings in that men of the sample typically began trying to start their family in the early 1950's when few physicians specialized in infertility and few medical procedures and options were available. Additionally, two of the outcome measures of this study, parenting and marital outcome, were not solely dependent upon the men's choices alone. Finally, the longitudinally collected data of Snarey, Son, Kuehne, Hauser, & Vaillant's (1987) study cannot prove a literal direction for causality from these findings.

In a related study, Bartell (1986) studied 51 couples, ages 21 and 36, and attempted to put Erikson's life stage theory of development, specifically the crisis of intimacy versus isolation in young adulthood, to an empirical test. Bartell's (1986) examination of the relationship between the level of intimacy and conflict resolution behavior in young married couples however, failed to reflect any significant differences among men and women. The only significant findings

refected differences between husbands and wives and were essentially sex differences, which were more reflective of the greater power of sex to predict behavior. As a result, Bartell (1986) suggests intimacy interview, sampling and methodological improvements for further studies.

Recent attempts to replicate or apply Levinson's age-graded stages to specific and special populations have been made in four recent studies. In a study that compared Levinson's and Easterlin's hypotheses concerning personal well-being in adulthood, Gay (1986) analyzed examined Levinson's organismic and Easterlin's mechanistic approach independently, as well as integrated the two in a broader age, period, cohort framework. Thus, whereas Levinson and Easterlin delt strictly with age and cohort size respectively, Gay's (1986) more general approach included an analysis controled by survey year, as well as age and cohort size. Analyzing data from three sets of replicated nationwide surveys, and from Vital Statistics of the United States: Volume II -- Mortality and Volume III-- Marriage and Divorce, Gay (1986) offers little support for either Levinson's or Easterlin's theory as stated. However, the results do indicate an age effect that is slightly different from Levinson's hypothesis in that younger groups of men tend to be less satisfied of well off than the remaining age groups. With respect to Easterlin's concerns, members of "boom cohorts" tend to be less satisfied or well off and experience higher rates of divorce and suicide than do the remaining age groups (Gay, 1986). In another Levisonian study, DiMartini (1987) looked at the impact of the Age Thirty Transition on the personality structure of men.

DiMartini (1987) found that during the Age Thirty Transition, men's personality progresses through a phase of self-criticism and depression to a phase of restoration and renewed promise, resulting in the emergence of a more adult self better equipped to participate in the adult world. Relying upon biographical data gained from 14 to 19 hour individual interviews of the lives of six men between ages of 32 and 37, DiMartini's (1987) results support Levinson's theory that the life cycle is composed of specific age-linked structure building (stable) and structure changing (transitional) periods. As a result, an individual's success in developing a real adult version of himself seems directly related to the extent to which he is able to tolerate and recover from the regressive pulls experienced during the Age Thirty Transition (DiMartini, 1987).

Three other recent studies have sought to apply Levinson's age-graded stages to specific populations of American religious men, resigned American priests, and Black male entrepreneurs. In an examination of American religious men, Miserandino (1984) examined the developmental characteristics of the Early Adulthood era when the life structure was centered about commitment to a professional religious life style rather than career or family commitments. Miserandino's (1984) results supported Levinson's major assumptions that male development occurs within an intrinsic context of an underlying order and a sequence of specific periods that constitute a developmental life pattern. Although Miserandino's (1984) study was of a significantly different group of men than those men studied by Levinson, Miserandino's (1984) study confirms the

assertion that issues of intimacy and friendship are dominant during the Early Adulthood Era. Additionally however, Miserandino (1984) found that men committed to a religious life had significantly more relationships of intimacy with both men and women than did the men of the Levinson study (Miserandino, 1984).

In a related study with a similar population, Tramonte (1986) qualitatively investigated the reasons why 16 American priests, born between 1927 and 1943 resigned from their ministries. Relying on two separate analytical lenses -- a thematic analysis of reasons for resignation and a developmental study of the men applying Levinson's psychosocial theory of adult development -- Tramonte (1986) identified numerous reasons for men's decisions to leave: love for a particular woman; loneliness, intimacy, and sexuality; celibacy and marriage; dissatisfaction with Church and/or religious order or diocesan living; and a search for freedom and autonomy.

Tramonte's (1986) developmental analysis supports Levinson's postulation of an alternating structure-building and structure-changing periods for men. However, those same finding also question Levinson's construct of age-linked periods, especially for men in middle adulthood, wherein Tramonte (1986) found that resigned priests dealt with some of the developmental tasks at later age than postulated. As a result, Tramonte (1986) concluded that Levinson's theory may need to be modified when it is applied to men who have committed themselves to a Catholic professional religious life-style. According to Tramonte (1986), the

men involved in his (1986) study developed differently than Levinson's sample because of the unique structure of the institutional Church and priesthood that seemed to delay the men's attainment of responsibility and independence (Tramonte, 1986).

Finally, in Herbert's (1985) investigation of ten Black male entrepreneurs, the effects of racism on some of the major concepts of Levinson's theory were considered. From results drawn from a of sample of Black male entrepreneurs between ages of 35 and 50, Herbert (1985) found an absence of mentoring experiences for all of the Black entrepreneurs. As a result, Herbert (1985) has proposed that two new developmental tasks be added for black adult male psychosocial development: 1) to form an individual racial identity that both acknowledges and frees the individual of racism and prejudices, and 2) to form an individual self-concept dedicated to the eradication and abolition of racial discrimination, racial prejudice, and racism from our society.

A third focus within the recent adult male developmental research has leveled criticisms of Levinson's age-graded stages, and questioned the universality of those transitional stages. Harris (1985) investigated the psychosocial changes of 60 men representing four age cohorts, 30, 40, 50, 60. From their responses from extensive semistructured interviews, Harris (1985) found that transitions were not associated with age per se. As a result, Harris (1985) used the absence of major transitions across the career phase as further support of the view that normal expectable life changes do not provoke developmental crises. With these

findings in mind, Harris (1985) further argued that Levinson's age-linked transitions may not be as universal as had been suggested, or they are explainable by factors other than age.

A final focus for the male adult developmental research has considered the stability and consistency of the adult male personality. In an investigation of the stability of personality among older adults than younger adults, Finn's (1986) longitudinal study found substantial evidence of a greater stability on many traits in the older than in the younger age/cohort group. Finn's (1986) results were gathered from self-ratings of 15 item scales of the MMPI (Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory), from 459 men in 2 cohorts, that were followed from 1947 to 1977. Unfortunately, the generalizabilty of Finn's (1986) findings are limited to a self-report measures of personality from a particular sample cohort of white, male, upper-class individuals who remain in the same geographical area for much of their lives.

This summary of recent descriptive studies has considered the description and findings of the various behavioral patterns that have been found between the sexes and within them. The theoretical emphasis within recent studies of male and female populations has tended to favor and evaluate males and females according to an age-graded, internally-driven theoretical perspective. This emphasis has also been present within the recent descriptive studies of male only populations. Among the majority of the female only population descriptive studies however, the theoretical focus has considered the life-span behavioral differences

in women's adult development. As a result, emphasis within studies of women only populations have focused on such things as the role of relationship as intregal to women's adult psychosocial development.

Each of these descriptions for the sexes could be taken as causal. However, these descriptive studies were not designed for cause-and-effect analysis. To infer causal relationships within and between these descriptive studies, at this point, would be premature until classifications of alternative behavior from the patterns can be formulated, empirically verified, and built into a general developmental theory. Therefore the further synthesis and summary of other recent developmental studies that seem tempered by five potential moderative variables to developmental outcomes are now considered.

Chapter IV: Potential Moderating Variables

The task of generalizing the age-graded tasks and various behavioral pattern outcomes found among elite and middle-class men and women to the general population or other cohorts is complex and problematic. For so long the majority of these recent descriptive studies were not designed for cause-and-effect analysis. As a result, any summary of these descriptive age-graded influences, was tempered by five moderating phenomena: (1) changes in culturally acceptable roles and expectations; (2) the number and kinds of roles in one's life; (3) one's life patterns; (4) the nature of one's field of endeavor; and (5) one's socioeconomic status.

With these moderating variables in mind, Rodgers (1984) has warned against attributing causality to descriptive studies. Therefore, in order to understand the reasons for that caution, and discover how these age-graded developmental patterns in adults temper the ability to generalize to the general population and other cohorts, a review of these recent descriptive studies in now undertaken.

Changes in culturally acceptable roles and expectations

Two recent life span studies suggest women's development may be moderated both within the workplace, where women experience sexual bias (Ruble, Cohen & Ruble, 1984), and in the home, where divorced mothers find little support for managing family responsibilities (Johnson, 1986).

In their review of the literature, Ruble, Cohen & Ruble (1984), suggest that sex stereotypes tend to create and maintain barriers for women and for individuals with feminine characteristics. Specifically, they found the existing historical patterns of employment discouraging to women aspiring to masculine fields. This, in turn, reduced the number of women actually entering male-dominated occupations, and therefore created an unbreakable cycle of employment. When women were hired into male-dominated occupations, Ruble, Cohen & Ruble (1984) found the possibility of bias was most pronounced when performance information was attributed to transitory causes rather than personal ability (Ruble, Cohen & Ruble, 1984).

In a similar study with an emphasis on managing conflicts between employment and child care responsibilities, Johnson (1986) surveyed 381 employed divorced mothers. These divorced mothers tended to perceive that although they have sources of help available, notably the child's father, friends, and relatives in the community, they do not perceive that the sources offered much help in managing family responsibilities. As a result, the divorced mothers handled the management of employment-child care conflicts themselves (Johnson, 1986). When arrangements could be made in advance, half of the mother's perceived nonfinancial help from the father as being available, whereas among other sources of support, the mothers perceived assistance as infrequent (Johnson, 1986).

Number and kind of roles in one's life

Within five recent studies, the impact of a second potential moderated

variable to life-span age-graded development has been suggested in the number and kind of roles women experience. Among the roles taken on by women, development seemed moderated in mothers of adolescent daughters (Bassoff, 1987), the role of mother (Barnett & Baruch, 1985), the quality versus the quantity of roles for women (Baruch & Barnett, 1986), the number of roles and women's vulnerability to stress related illness (Baruch, Biener, & Barnett, 1987), the loss of a role from involuntary job loss (DeFrank & Ivancevich, 1986), and the role of caregiver for an elderly spouse (Brubaker, 1986).

In the first of these five studies, Bassoff (1987) drew upon Jungian theoretical works and research in adult development to review the literature describing normal maternal development. With an emphasis on the maturational tasks of the mother and adolescent daughter, and the resulting maternal conflicts, Bassoff's (1987) review found the developmental tasks surprisingly similar, in that each must struggle with issues of separation, loss, and autonomy. Additionally, each has the opportunity to succeed (or fail) at reaching higher levels of maturity and psychic integration (Bassoff, 1987).

A second study explored the effects of stress experienced among midlife women in the role of mother. Barnett and Baruch (1985) examined the relationship of role strain (overload and conflict) and anxiety to three aspects of women's involvement in multiple roles: the number of roles occupied, the particular roles (paid worker, wife, mother); and the quality of experience within each role. The role of paid worker among women was not significantly related

to any of the three indicators of stress. Their findings were striking in that they found the role of parent rather than the paid worker as the major source of stress for women in the middle years. Additionally, they found the quality of experience within a woman's social roles a major independent predictor of role overload, role conflict, and anxiety.

An important implication of Barnett & Baruch's (1985) findings is their inconsistency with the commonly accepted notion that the more roles a person occupies, the greater the role strain and resultant decrements in well-being. Thus, regardless of employment status, mothers experienced higher levels of role overload and conflict than childless women (Barnett & Baruch, 1985). Finally, among nonemployed women, Barnett and Baruch (1985) found role conflict and role overload strongly related to anxiety.

Two design limitations of Barnett and Baruch's (1985) study, however, restrict the application of their findings. First, because their study was not longitudinal, stress may arise from sources not measured in the study, thus causing a lowering of the quality of experience that women perceive in their social roles. Additionally, because the study sampled specific groups rather a probability sample of American women, high-prestige occupations among American working women are possibly over-represented in this study.

In a follow-up study, Baruch and Barnett (1986) found the importance of qualitative rather than quantitative aspects of women's social roles is key to understanding their psychological well-being. Consistent with other studies

assessing the stress of role overload, role conflict, and anxiety, Baruch and Barnett (1986) found that role had a positive impact on well-being, even if such involvement also increased the number of roles a woman occupies. Additionally, Baruch and Barnett (1986) found women's well-being and their involvement in social roles varied according to their different roles, different dimensions of their well-being, and among different groups (Baruch and Barnett, 1986). For example, women younger than 35 who are mothers are more likely to have small children, and the quality of the mother role may be a more powerful influence on well-being than for older women. Major racial and ethnic differences may also exist among women, so that the role of mother may be more central to the self-esteem of Black women than of Caucasian women.

As in any cross-sectional study, a limitation of these findings is that the direction of relations cannot be known. Thus, it may be possible, that women who are high in self-esteem shape their roles so as to make them satisfying. Additional sample limitations of Baruch and Barnett's study are their reliance upon a restricted age range of the sample and the single focus on Caucasian women (Baruch and Barnett, 1986).

In a later study, Baruch, Biener & Barnett (1987) reexamined the assumptions about work and family stress, and considered how work and family roles interact. Specifically, they turned their attention to the qualitative aspects of roles as necessary for an understanding of such interactions and the effects they have upon women's involvement in multiple roles (Baruch, Biener & Barnett,

1987). These later findings challenge the assumption that as women add employment to their existing family roles, they become more vulnerable to stress-related illness (Baruch, Biener & Barnett, 1987). This finding, however, is not surprising in light of the fact that the jobs most likely to involve stressors that impair health and combine high levels of demands with little autonomy are typically low-level and low-paying ones (Baruch, Biener & Barnett, 1987).

In their review of the diverse empirical behavioral, medical, and social science research in the field of involuntary job loss, DeFrank & Ivancevich (1986), found the number and kind of roles in one's life moderate the effect of involuntary job loss on the individual. DeFrank and Ivancevich (1986) suggest that for some individuals, job loss may have positive results. These results, however, are only further evidence to the general lack of a coherent body of knowledge regarding job loss. The authors therefore highlight the need for further studies involving multiple variables and hypotheses within the same population over an extended time span.

A final study of the number and kinds of roles as moderatous of adult life-span development considered adjustments and supports necessary in the role of caregiver for an elderly spouse. From detailed case-studies of elderly individuals who provide care to spouses residing in long-term care facilities, Brubaker (1986) suggested the developmental task of caring for an elderly spouse is successfully accomplished when caregivers adjust to their situations by accepting their care as meaningful. Several other factors, such as social support, and the health of the

caregiving spouse were also reported to be important to the role of caregiver (Brubaker, 1986). Unfortunately, these factors were not enough to prevent those individuals who cared for their spouses at home prior to admitting them to long-term care facilities from feeling overwhelmed and inadequate (Brubaker, 1986).

Life patterns

Much of the recent literature focusing on life-span life patterns of development has centered on aging and the process of aging. Five recent studies have considered how we understand aging (Neugarten, 1986, Burbank, 1986); how we must be more sensitive to older people (Neugarten, 1984); and how we gather meaning from events in our lives (Handel, 1987, Lachmann, 1985). These five studies further highlight the variables that impede our ability to generalize the age-graded influences of these specific populations to general populations or other cohorts.

In a brief overview of the psychological aspects of aging, Neugarten (1984) highlights the need for a special sensitivity to older people among health professionals. Since physical illness requires psychological shifts in self-concept and in body-concept older people must also acknowledge and adjust to dependency. Thus, Neugarten (1984) warns that as old people rightly expect that illness will be life-shortening, they have an equally compelling fear of extended deterioration which may make life itself unwelcome.

In a later essay, Neugarten (1986) suggests our aging society provides a new context and new opportunity in which to rethink traditional views of age.

Since age is considered a major dimension of social organization and a major touchstone by which individuals organize and interpret their experiences throughout life, Neugarten (1986) suggests the most constructive ways of adapting to an aging society will emerge by focusing, not on age at all, but on more relevant consideration of the dimensions of human needs, human competencies and human diversity.

Meanwhile, in a similar effort to re-evaluate what is involved in aging and the aging process, Burbank (1986) analyzed the relevant research and found none of the three major psychosocial theories of aging -- activity theory, disengagement theory, and continuity theory -- clearly supported by empirical evidence. As a result of this discovery, Burbank (1986) advocates a phenomenological approach that utilizes the criteria of the intersubjectivity of meaning, testability, and empirical adequacy, in order to productively study the psychosocial aspects of aging. Burbank (1986) suggests that meaning in life, particularly the meaning that activity and participation in various roles has for the older person, may be a multidimensional variable. With such a phenomenological approach and the technique of life review, Burbank (1986) holds that the meaning of events in older persons' lives may be further explored and that aging may begin to be viewed as continuous with the rest of the life cycle, rather than beginning at age 65.

Two other life pattern studies have considered the ways in which adults gather meaning, but the methodological errors and difficulties within the studies

make it difficult to further generalize their findings to the general population or other cohorts. In the first of these studies, Handel (1987) considered the subjective sense of continuity and change of self through the course and direction of development of self. Drawing on autobiographical data from "comprehensive autobiographies" of middle-aged and older individuals, Handel (1987) found adults were impressed by the powerful impact of chance encounters and events on their subsequent development. Unfortunately, because these findings were drawn from a limited cohort and relatively small number of autobiographical data, Handel (1987) suggests that a more extensive and diversified collection of autobiographies be consulted in future research.

Another limited study, though from a psychoanalytic perspective, suggests 2 milestones occur during adulthood which have a decisive impact on both an adult's sense of continuity in time and the acceptance of transience: object acquisition (i.e., acquiring a mate or a child), and object loss (i.e., loss of one's parents) (Lachmann, 1985). Unfortunately, while Lachmann's (1985) findings are further suggestive of a reciprocal relationship between a sense of temporal continuity and the acceptance of transience within adulthood, they were gathered from the clinical vignettes of only two young adults.

Nature of one's field of endeavor

From clerical workers (Charner & Schlossberg, 1986), the disabled (Power, Hershenson, & Schlossberg, 1985), Type A personality insurance agents (Matteson, Ivancevich & Smith, 1984), to religious sisters (Chavez, 1986), and male teachers

at midlife (Furey, 1984), the collection of recent studies focusing on the nature of an individual's occupational field all continue to highlight the difficulty involved in generalizing particular occupational age-graded influences to the general population and other cohorts.

With data gathered from interviews of clerical and support workers, most of whom were White women under 55 years of age and with less than 4 years of postsecondary education, Charner & Schlosberg (1986) explored the transition of clerical workers, who, because of the nature of their employment, face a high degree of stress. The findings of this study illustrate how clerical and support workers rely primarily on the single strategy outlook of being a fighter. Thus, as they cope with transitions, clerical and support workers considered different options for coping, which depended on the context of the transition (Charner & Schlosberg, 1986). Although these findings shed light on transitions and the transition process, this exploratory survey sample is limited by age, ethnicity and educational level. As a result, Charner & Schlosberg (1986) suggest the consideration of four guidelines to further research: 1) the differences, over time, among individuals in different transition situations; 2) the use of different sets of coping strategies across different types of transitions; 3) the inclusion of the coping mechanisms of a wider array of individuals (than clerical workers) to life transitions; and 4) the refinement of transition and transition process outcomes assessment.

As with all transitions representing a process of change, midlife is one of

the important and inevitable transitions during the adult life cycle. The presence of a disability can contribute to the intensification of this experience. In a second study considering the nature of occupational endeavor, Power, Hershenson & Schlossberg (1985) briefly describe and discuss the theoretical perspectives of the midlife stage of adult development and the effects of disability at midlife. They also suggest interventions to deal with these factors at midlife.

Another study within this group, investigated the relationship between Type A behavior and the sales performance, as well as Type A behavior in relation to job satisfaction among insurance agents (Matteson, Ivancevich & Smith, 1984). With data gathered from a sample of 355 life insurance agents, Matteson, Ivancevich & Smith (1984) found no significant differences between Type A and Type B agents on three measures of sales performance and on one measure of general job satisfaction. As a result, these particular findings do not support the popular view that Type A agents are more successful performers than Type B's. In fact, Matteson, Ivancevich & Smith's (1984) findings lead to questions concerning the liabilities associated with Type A agents, since Type A measures were correlated with self-reports of stress and health complaints. While limited in sample and methodology, these important findings highlight the need for additional information and research on these two important dimensions of job performance and job satisfaction.

From biographical interview data of eight religious women, Chavez (1986) examined the religious call of Mexican-American women religious in the context

of Levinson's theory of Early Adult Development. Chavez (1986) found the religious call to be similar to Levinson's Dream, which Levinson describes as a vision or image of self-in-the-adult-world, but different because the religious call originates in an experience of God. As a result, Chavez (1986) describes the religious call as a religious form of Levinson's Dream. Yet, as has been seen in other women-only population studies, Chavez's (1986) participants differed from Levinson's male subjects in their emphasis on relationships rather than achievement. Note that Chavez's (1986) sample of women is restricted in cohort and size, and thus limited in its generalization to other cohorts.

A final occupational study examined the relationship between life cycle theory and dissatisfaction with teaching at midlife. Furey (1984) found the sources of dissatisfaction among male teachers approaching midlife to be rooted in age-related psychological issues exacerbated by the innately career-less nature of the teaching career. Unfortunately it is difficult to generalize Furey's results because they were drawn from two levels of limited analysis: an initial qualitative analysis of two former teachers, followed by a quantitative analysis of 38 male teachers surveyed from the same school district who remained in teaching. As a result, Furey (1984) recommends further research that relies on a broader and more diversified statistical base in order to determine whether similar patterns of dissatisfaction exist among women teachers (Furey, 1984).

Socioeconomic status

Two studies within the recent research literature suggest how socioeconomic

status may mediate age-graded influences of adult development to the general population and other cohorts. In a review of the recent literature, Berg (1986) found social competence to be an intregal component of intelligence throughout life-span development. Berg's (1986) contextual perspective on social competence emphasizes the process whereby the individual produces an optimal fit between a set of social skills and the demands of the social environment. Berg (1986) argues that analyzing social skills through a normative stage theory of social competence does not capture the complexity of an individual's social skills. There may be better captured by a model of adaptation to the demands of one's particular social environment.

Meanwhile, in a longitudinal study on 79 women from the Berkeley Guidance Study, Caspi and Elder (1986) examined how social and psychological factors interact over time in the course of successful aging. Central to their study were the antecedents of successful aging as expressed in life satisfaction, an outlook that presumably mirrors the life that has been lived. Their findings indicate that the consequences of adaptive resources in early adulthood are best observed in relation to structured conditions. Thus, women's intellectual skills were most influential for mastery under trying conditions and were indirectly predictive of positive outcomes for working class women. Emotional health was directly influential of life satisfaction under the more favorable life ways of women from the middle class of the 1930's (Caspi & Elder, 1986).

The importance of Caspi and Elder's (1986) findings is their identification

of two processes relevant for psychological well-being in old age, and more generally, for the individual's ability to cope with life problems. First, they highlight the importance of personal resources in various situations: the relation between environmental demands and adaptive skills. Second, they highlight the connections between problem situations across the life course. Therefore, in terms of life span development, Caspi and Elder (1986) suggest the ability to cope with new situations and events is partly shaped by: 1) having had to cope with similar events in the past; and 2) having had problem situations marked by conflict and stress across the life course that initiated an organizing function in development, requiring adjustments that structured and restructured life trajectories.

The scope the developmental topics and sample cohorts explored within the life-span studies reviewed have examine the changing roles, the number and kinds of roles in which adults find themselves, the emerging life-patterns of aging, and the occupations and socioeconomic status of American adult development. Each of these influences to adult development intervene and limit the possible generalizations that can be made of these descriptive studies. Nonetheless, they do provide some noteworthy beginnings and directions for design and methodological improvements of future research studies, which will be examined later in this paper. Meanwhile, further attention is given to the synthesis and summary of the other recent developmental descriptive studies that point to new directions in the recent adult developmental research.

Chapter V: New Directions in the Research

While the vast majority of recent descriptive studies on adult life-span developmental theory have continued to apply and develop foundational and descriptive theories to new populations, some have begun to reinterpret these theories. From within psychoanalytic, Eriksonian, and Family Systems models recent studies have suggested ways for these models to be more inclusive of adult mid-life development, self development and environmental stimuli to development.

Psychoanalytic Studies

With an emphasis on normal adult development and on the age related factors that contribute to healthy growth and aging, Alonso & Schippers (1986) applied object relations theory to adult mid-life development. Grounding their discussion on the psychoanalytic literature on mid-life and the mid-life developmental sequence developed by Melanie Klein and her followers, Alonso and Schippers (1986) looked specifically at the mid-life manifestations of the developmental sequence for adults between the ages of 40 and 60. By applying certain principles of object relations theory to phenomena that are common to people, Alonso and Schippers (1986) believed that object relations theory could more broadly describe the issues of internal and external developments in mid-life relationships.

As a result of this approach, Alonso and Schippers (1986) argue that the depressive position is the central developmental process, leading to integration and

generativity in mid-life. According the Alonso and Schippers (1986), this depressive position is attained along three parameters: the loss of innocence, the capacity for concern, and a definition of maturity and interdependence. Thus, within this framework, Alonso and Schippers (1986) see the mid-life years, with their imperative for the care of others and the exercise of altruism and generativity, impressing on the individual the need to delineate more clearly than ever the pressures and advantages that are obtainable in mid-life. Without such a perspective, Alonso & Schippers (1986) believe our understanding of maturity in mid-life development is tempered by an understanding of maturity as staying alone, getting ahead, making money, and not needing people very much.

In Sutton's (1986) discussion and commentary of Alonso & Schippers' (1986) proposal, Sutton (1986) questions the usefulness of the concept of the "depressive position" to describe a level of intrapsychic and interpersonal achievement. While agreeing that aspects of this depressive characteristic can be found in midlife, Sutton (1986) warns that further cautions must be taken before it is translated into a particular mid-life manifestation.

Another recent study has offered an 'autonomization approach' to adult development, whereby Pietrasinski (1988) proposes through autonomization the adult develops the competence of self-improvement. Thus, as the adult becomes fully responsible for his/her development and gradually acquires increased control over his/her biography, a personal self competence develops and becomes a new factor of the individual's development. The basic components of Pietrasinski's

(1988) biographical competence that aid in development and life are: 1) self-creational social and individual knowledge; and 2) biographical reflection and competence comprised of thoughts and actions commonly described as wisdom. The overriding goal of Pietrasinski's (1988) proposed conception of the autonomizing promotion of adult development is to assist people in developing their biographical competence.

Pietrasinski's (1988) results seem to support the claim that one's activity is the principal development factor in adulthood, such that Pietrasinski's (1988) subjects most often referred to some activity or its circumstances (job family, home, travelling abroad, etc.), and secondly toward motivating needs and development-factoring conditions (difficult situations, personal autonomy, etc) in their lives.

Adult development from this broad perspective necessarily seeks to capture the diverse person-forming factors that operate in everyday life. From his perspective, Pietrasinski (1988) believes that the customary approach of the scientist who pieces together shreds of evidence must be replaced by efforts to grasp adult developmental problems in all their breadth and depth, with a particular view to the adult's self-creational potential. Therein lies the theoretical and practical challenge to autonomization.

Eriksonian Studies

Based on the general proposition that not all of Erik Erikson's early stages have equal significance in the character of the later stages, Logan (1986) poses

a systematic scheme of Erikson's developmental theory. Logan looks upon Erikson's theory as a cycle that repeats twice: once from basic trust to identity, and again from identity to integrity. Within this scheme, Logan (1986) preserves Erikson's key idea that each stage integrates previous states and that some stages are regarded as more important than others. Logan (1986) thus views the stage of intimacy as a replay of basic trust and autonomy, in that it tends to be a repetition of an existential theme characterizing basic trust and autonomy. Logan (1986) views generativity as a replay of initiative and industry, in that generativity repeat the instrumental theme that characterizes initiative and industry.

Therefore, as Logan (1986) proposes it in his paper, the recapitulation of basic trust is viewed as somewhat more central to identity formation than the recapitulation of autonomy initiative or industry. Seen in this way, the development of self-consciousness over history is construed as a process whereby each of Erikson's stages successively becomes pivotal from era to era. The stage of intimacy versus isolation sees a cycle begin again, with the intimacy stage viewed as a recapitulation of both basic trust and autonomy together.

In a related paper, Acklin (1986) seeks to develop a perspective for understanding adult development from an ecological object relations perspective. Such a perspective recognizes both the developmental initiatives innate in human beings across the life span and the environmental requisites for their emergence and fulfillment. Based on contemporary psychoanalytic and developmental theory, Acklin's (1986) thesis has four components. In the first of these components,

Acklin (1986) postulates that Erikson's concept of epigenesis has applicability across the life span. According to this view, psychic structures are driven by innate, phase-specific maturational pressures which help to inform the individual's growth toward psychological differentiation, individuation, and self-completion. Secondly, Acklin (1986) believes that beyond-the-self identity is constituent to human maturational and self-completion. Next, Acklin (1986) holds that successful adult maturation requires a mirroring-facilitating environment. The final component of Acklin's (1986) thesis emphasizes the essential role religious values, meanings, images and communities play as elements of the facilitating environment of later life. In short, Acklin (1986) believes that the success or failure of self-completion reflects the quality and adequacy of the social, political and historical influences conditioning the facilitating environment.

In a discussion of the basic and nonbasic determinants of human behavior, Kassin & Baron (1986) suggest that the identification of basic human determinants carry important implications for theories of social perception. Kassin & Baron (1986) point out that the age at which attributional rules develop indicates the beginnings of the use of cues. This being the case, they argue that the age at which attributional rules develop can be used as an indicator of the processing by adults.

Kassin & Baron (1986) believe their ideas concerning the basic and nonbasic determinants can serve as a model for the development of adult social interaction. This model moves away from strictly intrapersonal, cognitive

consideration to the idea that the process should be framed within a pragmatic, often interpersonal context in which the development of an interpersonal relationship is likened to the development of an individual.

Family Systems Studies

In an effort to understand the individuation process, its role in identity formation, and the role of the family system's level of differentiation as a mediator of these processes, Sabatelli & Mazor (1985) examined the theoretical constructs of individuation and differentiation. Their discussion was based on the assumption that both the family system and the individual developmental perspectives are interdependent. Both the individual's efforts toward separation from the family of origin and the impact of those efforts have an impact on the individual's identity processes. Additionally, it is within the social framework of the family system in which this individuation occurs.

From this assumption, Sabatelli & Mazor (1985) make a conceptual distinction between the individuation and differentiation constructs in order to systematically categorize family processes into individuation and identity formation processes. Within this view, a family's system level of differentiation and transactional processes are important elements related to the individual's maturational changes and to the individual process. As a result, Sabatelli & Mazor (1985) suggest a necessary interdisciplinary connection between the developmental and system approaches so that further understanding of the differentiation and individuation constructs as mediators of identity formation can

be made. With such an interdisciplinary connection they believe that new avenues of research into the identity formation process would be able to examine the family system in relation to personal adjustment.

These recent studies have begun to describe, reinterpret and reconceptualize adult developmental theories within the psychoanalytic, Eriksonian and Family Systems models. Additionally, these summary descriptions may point to ways in which these theoretical models can begin to move toward greater inclusion of adult mid-life development, self-development and adult social interactions. With such speculation and future examination of the implications of these studies, new directions in the research can emerge. A summary of this body of recent descriptive studies and related research is now undertaken.

Chapter VI: Summary, Analysis and Conclusion

This review of the descriptive studies and related research has sought to describe the kinds of psychosocial developmental changes adults experience as either age-graded stages or life events. Several of the recent theorists and researchers (including Neugarten, Baruck and Barnett, Baruch, Biener and Barnett, Helson, Mitchell & Moane, Charner & Schlossberg, Johnson, and Power, Hershenson, & Schlossberg) emphasize external causal life-event influences and reflect a behavioral orientation to adult psychosocial development. Others (such as Erikson, Levinson, Buhler and Massarik, Kahn, Zimmerman, Csikszentmihalyi, and Getzels, Pogue-Geile & Rose, Dubow, Huesmann, and Eron, Caspi and Elder, Harris, Costa and McCrae, Snarey, Son, Kuehne, Hauser & Vaillant) place emphasis instead on the internal psychological and biological age-graded influences and reflect a psychoanalytic orientation to adult psychosocial development (Rodgers, 1984).

As Rodgers (1984) highlighted in his review, the difference between these two theoretical emphases influences the constructs they employ and the relationships they investigate. Behaviorally oriented theorists focus on individual differences in development by describing and explaining the relationship between specific life events (antecedents) and the resultant responses of individuals as mediated by biological, psychological, and contextual factors. Psychoanalytically oriented theorists emphasize internal psychological meaning and employ constructs

such as developmental stages, tasks, and personality types in order to describe regularities in within-individual and between-individual behavior changes (Rodgers, 1984).

Rodgers' (1984) review of this area of literature highlighted those theorists who have suggested and attempted to integrate these two theoretical approaches to adult psychosocial development. However since that time, it seems that little advancement has been made with this integration. The majority of the recent studies included in this review, whether behaviorally or psychoanalytically-oriented, have for the most part remained descriptive or correlational studies from which causality cannot be determined. Thus by way of review and analysis it is important to summarize the empirical status of the most recent body of research and to look at the possibilities for future research and the conclusions that may be drawn from this most recent body of literature.

Summary of the 1983-1989 Findings

The recent literature has continued to describe gender differences in identity and intimacy (Kahn, Zimmerman, Csikszentmihalyi, and Getzels, 1985), adult ego development, the result of early childhood rearing practices (Dubow, Huesmann and Eron, 1987, Caspi, 1986), the stability and consistency of early adulthood across adulthood (Stevens and Truss, 1986, Costa and McCrae, 1988, Conley, 1984, and Pogue-Geile & Rose, 1985) and the transition of roles to adulthood (Marini, 1987, Chiriboga, 1984) among age-graded cohorts of men and women.

Additionally, within those studies that have focused on women only samples, researchers have continued to describe internally driven, age-graded female differences by applying Levinsonian stages to women's adult psychosocial development (Roberts and Newton, 1987). The majority of the recent adult female psychosocial developmental literature, however, has focused on external influences to life-span development. Such external influences have included the effects of: the 'social clock' on women's psychosocial development (Helson, Mitchell and Moane, 1984), personality development changes across various and differing roles (Helson and Moane, 1987), divorce on mothers of adolescent daughters (Johnson, 1986), and midlife for gifted women (Schuster, 1987).

Among the recent descriptive studies done with predominately male populations, further applications of the foundational theories of Erikson and Levinson have been described. Erikson's theory has been recently applied to men's parenting resolutions, marital outcomes and midlife achievement of psychosocial generativity on the basis of knowledge of their prior infertility coping strategies and parenting outcomes (Snarey, Son, Kuehne, Hauser, and Vaillant, 1987). Further replications of Levinson's age-graded stages have been applied in order to describe personal well-being (Gay, 1986). Levinson's age-graded stages have been enhanced for Age Thirty Transition men (DiMartini, 1987). Meanwhile the application of Levinson's theory to special populations of professional religious men (Miserandino, 1984, Tramonte, 1986) and African American entrepreneurs (Herbert, 1985) has provided several noteworthy possibilities for further

refinement of Levinsonian theory. By the same token, criticisms of the universality of Levinson's age-graded transitions have been explained by factors other than age (Harris, 1985) and greater stability on many traits in older men has been described (Finn, 1986), pointing to areas of exploration for further research.

The results of a large body of the recent studies descriptive of age-graded influences to adult development are tempered by: (1) changes in culturally acceptable roles and expectations, (2) the number and kinds of roles in one's life, (3) one's life patterns, (4) the nature of one's field of endeavor, and (5) one's socioeconomic status. This impedes attempts to generalize results to the general population or other cohorts. Nonetheless, these studies highlight specific sample populations and influences on development that with methodological and sampling improvements could serve as examples for further studies.

Among the recent descriptive life-span studies of women, barriers to women's development were described as originating both within the workplace (Ruble, Cohen and Ruble, 1984), and in the home among divorced mothers (Johnson, 1986). Given the number and kinds of roles in which women now find themselves, barriers to their adult development have also been described among mothers and among mothers of adolescent daughters (Barnett & Baruch, 1985, Bassoff, 1987). Such barriers to adult development have also been described according to the quality of women's roles (Baruch & Barnett, 1986), and in their vulnerability to stress related to illness (Baruch, Biener, & Barnett, 1987).

Barriers to adult development have also been described when adults lose a roles following involuntary job loss (DeFrank & Ivancevich, 1986), and when they gain additional roles of being the caregiver for an elderly spouse (Brubaker, 1986).

Recent descriptive studies of the influences to adult developmental life patterns have described the barriers to the aging process. Specifically, these studies have considered the barriers to development in how we understand aging (Neugarten, 1984, 1986, Burbank, 1986), and how we gather meaning from our lives (Handel, 1987, Lachmann, 1985). Additionally, among studies that have focused on how the individual's field of endeavor influences and tempers adult life-span development, descriptions of barriers among clerical workers (Charner and Schlossberg, 1986), the disabled (Power, Hershenson, & Schlossberg, 1985), Type A personality insurance agents (Matteson, Ivancevich, and Smith, 1984), religious sisters (Chavez, 1986), and male secondary education teachers at midlife (Furey, 1984) have all been examined. Finally, two recent studies have highlighted how the role of one's socioeconomic status impedes adult development: when social competence is considered intregal to intellectual development (Berg, 1986), and where personal resources in responding to environmental demands influence one's developmental adaptive life-span skills (Caspi & Elder, 1986).

Three recent age-graded studies have been descriptive and reinterpretive new directions for adult development within the psychoanalytic (Alonso and Schippers, 1986), Eriksonian (Logan, 1986, Acklin, 1986, Kassin and Baron, 1986)

and Family Systems models (Sabatelli and Mazor, 1985). Each of the three studies suggest possible ways for these theoretical models to be more inclusive of adult mid-life development, self-development, and the environmental stimuli that influence development.

Possibilities for Future Research

As with the research and general theories of adult psychosocial development that preceded them, the recent adult developmental studies continue to be limited by sample and experimental design. Due in part to the difficulties of sample availability and to limited research funding, most of the recent adult developmental studies have relied upon small samples. Unfortunately, such small samples often only represent a narrow segment of the population, such as the upper and middle socioeconomic classes, many of whom are undergoing psychotherapeutic treatment. As a result, many of the adult developmental theories derived from such descriptive studies can present biased results because of their reliance on overly optimistic descriptions of the outcomes and influences to adult development. In many such studies, reliance upon small samples can increase the incidence of crisis, anxiety, depression, self-doubt, and confusion beyond what might be exhibited in other individuals of the same birth and socioeconomic-class cohorts not undergoing psychotherapeutic treatment. Rodgers (1984) noted how the early foundational theories of Erikson and Jung often reflected this bias, and how other recent theorists, such as Vaillant, Levinson, Neugarten have attempted to insure that fewer of these characteristics were

among their samples.

An additional sample limitation within the adult developmental research has been that many of the foundational theories of Erikson, Vaillant, and later, Levinson, were based upon male rather than female subjects. Because gender differences seem to be influential, the difficulty with unbalanced approaches to gender sample selection has increasingly become apparent. When foundational theories and descriptive studies based on male samples are applied to women, questions concerning their validity have been raised (Rodgers, 1984).

In his 1984 review, Rodgers (1984) suggested and emphasized the need for basic in-depth studies of small samples selected from different socioeconomic-class groups. Such sample groups included women, so as to allow for greater understanding of adult development and further development of general theories drawn from more comprehensive data bases. Since Rodgers' (1984) review, the trend to rely so heavily upon male-only samples has gradually changed. This change has been noted in the increased number of recent studies based on all female or female inclusive studies included in this review. Nonetheless, many of these recent studies still do not adequately describe or validly represent the general population of women and men in various age groups. While more inclusive of both genders within their samples, many findings of these studies continue, nonetheless, to be limited by small and restricted samples and therefore are not generalizable to the general population.

Similar to many of the studies that preceded them, the research designs of

most recent studies of this review used simple cross-sectional or longitudinal designs. Consequently, the generalizability of their findings continues to be limited by methodological difficulties inherent within their designs. The difficulty with simple cross-sectional designs lies in their ability to often confound age with cohort. As a result, differences found in these recent studies may reflect age-related changes, or the impact of different historical and cultural experiences of different birth cohorts rather than true change. Correspondingly, other recent studies utilizing simple longitudinal studies can confound age with time and measurement. Thus, in the same way, differences found in their results may reflect age-related changes or the impact of events occurring at a given point in history, which may affect a given cohort but which may not be descriptive of other birth cohorts (Rodgers, 1984).

The problem of generalization to a standard population has been persistent and vexing throughout the adult longitudinal literature. It is extremely difficult to obtain a representative or random sample of general adults and to retain them in repeating testing over a span of many years. Serious bias due both to volunteer effects and to subject attrition is also common. As a result, the reliance upon small samples, in turn represents another inherent bias of these descriptive studies.

An additional difficulty lies in the relative youth of this area of research. A great number of current adult developmental theories have been based on individuals who were raised during the Great Depression, and who were

adolescents and young adults during Would War II. Today's "Baby Boom" generation of younger adults grew up in a period of relative affluence and prosperity during the civil rights movement and Vietnam War. They have perhaps had different emphases, values, and attitudes than their parents of the Great Depression and World War II generation. As a result, these two historical environments may have reinforced different behaviors upon these two groups. As such, changes in older groups may be due to cultural changes and historical events rather than development alone and which may not be descriptive of today's younger adults (Rodgers, 1984).

At present it is important to remember that findings in many of the recent adult developmental research hold only for the select populations their samples represent and not necessarily for the population in general. Generalizations beyond these parameters need to be interpreted with great caution. As a result, one important direction for future research lies in tracing the limits of generalizations for specific groups, especially including individuals with psychiatric or neuropsychological impairments.

Ideal approaches to future studies of adult development and adult personality would be multicohort or sequential cross-sectional and longitudinal designs. They would help to clarify the possible confounded variables which have often been found in the general theories of adult development, and which have continued to be present in the samples of the recent adult developmental research (Rodgers, 1984). The difficulty with these designs lies in the extremely long

period of time necessary to complete multicohort studies, usually taking several decades of adult life to complete. One possible approach that loosely approximates sequential designs brings together the cumulative data from several studies currently done by different researchers at different times involving different cohorts. None of the most recent studies contained in this review used sequential designs.

Conclusions from the 1983-1989 Literature

However they were limited by sample and design restrictions, a number of the recent studies in adult psychosocial adult development have provided further descriptions of the influences to adult life-span development and have highlighted some noteworthy directions within this body of research. Recent descriptive studies have relied upon samples of male, and increasingly on female, and mixed sex samples to apply and reconceptualize Levinsonian, Eriksonian, Psychoanalytic, and Family Systems Theories. Other recent studies have attempted to integrate the behavioral and psychoanalytic theoretical perspectives to adult development. Several other studies, although limited in their generalizability because of small samples or design limitations, warrant mention because of their promising approaches, suggestive questions, and reconceptualizations of foundational theories of adult development.

Among the gender difference studies, Pogue-Geile and Rose's (1985) investigation into the role of genetic influences on adult personality development across the life cycle represents one of the few longitudinal twins studies of adults

to address the influences and stability of genetic and environmental influences on personality development. Other noteworthy studies of this review challenge Erikson's theory of generativity among men, and extend Levinson's theory among women and to specific all-male and all-female populations (Roberts & Newton, 1987, Snarey, Son, Kuehne, Hauser & Vaillant, 1987, Miserandino, 1984, Tramonte, 1986, Herbert, 1985, Chavez, 1986). A specific study on the Levinson's Age Thirty Transition and the universality of Levinson's age-graded transitions have also been highlighted in several recent studies (DiMartini, 1987, Harris, 1985).

Although the sampling difficulties found within these studies reduce their generalizability, they nonetheless highlight the way toward possibile advancements the foundational theories. Each study has helped to advance and clarify the need for improved sampling and measurement techniques, and the importance of sequential research designs.

From the recent studies focusing on female developmental several recent studies have added to the growing research focusing on the differences and barriers to women's adult development. Several researchers have again underscored the impact of stress upon women's development as they have considered women's role quality, the influences of the social clock, and the importance of relationship in the developmental life-span process of women (Helson, Mitchell & Moane, 1984, Johnson, 1986, Barnett & Baruch, 1985, 1987, Baruch & Barnett, 1986, Baruch, Biener, & Barnett, 1987).

Other researchers have focused on barriers to adult development within specific populations. Researchers have considered how clerical workers, the disabled, the aging, and adaptive life-span influences (Charner & Schlossberg, 1985, Power, Hershenson, & Schlossberg, 1985, Handel, 1987, Lachmann, 1985, Neugarten, 1984, 1986, Burbank, 1986, Caspi & Elder, 1986, Pietrasinski, 1988) all influence adult development. These studies have begun to highlight what might be viewed as a movement to integrate the behavioral and psychoanalytic theoretical approaches to adult psychosocial development, as mentioned previously in this review.

The quest for a comprehensive, and internally consistent, theory of adult psychosocial development continues to be made. The recent descriptive studies in this area have contributed to this quest. Nevertheless, new constructs and descriptive patterns still need to be further tested. More studies with women and broader ranges of socioeconomic groups need to be initiated. Studies using multicohort or sequential cross sectional and longitudinal designs are also needed to help clarify the possible confounded variables which have been present in the general theories of adult development. Overall, the recent descriptive studies summarized in this review have brought the body of adult psychosocial developmental research that much closer to a consistent approach to a comprehensive theory of adult psychosocial development and a greater understanding of what it means for adults to develop.

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the thesis is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the the degree of Masters of Arts.

5/29/80
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